The DUTY *and* MEASURES *of Brotherly Love.*

A

SERMON

Preach'd at the Revival

OF THE

ANNIVERSARY FEAST

OF THE

Gentlemen Educated at *Merchant Taylor's* SCHOOL,

At St. *Mary-le-Bow*, *December* 3. 1724.

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD, *JOSEPH*, *Wilcocks*
Lord Biſhop of *Gloceſter*.

LONDON:
Printed for J. WALTHOE, jun. over againſt the *Royal Exchange* in *Cornhill*. 1724.

A SERMON

G.R. III.
BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

JOHN CROWLEY, THOMAS AMBROSE, SAMUEL ONGLEY, JOHN PRESTON, Esqrs.

ROBERT FRANSHAM, THOMAS DADE, EDWARD HALSTED, JOHN EVERARD, Gent.

STEWARDS of the said Feast,

This DISCOURSE,

Preach'd and Publish'd at their Request,

Is Dedicated

By their Loving Friend and Servant,

JOS. GLOCESTER.

JOHN xiij. 34, 35.

A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you that ye alſo love one another.

By this ſhall all Men know that ye are my Diſciples if ye have love one to another.

THE Words read to you, are ſome of the laſt that our bleſſed Lord ſpoke to his Diſciples. Being in a little time to part from them, He was willing to leave upon their Minds one of his weightieſt Precepts, and ſome of the beſt Advice He had to give them; and that it might carry with it the greater Force, it was introduced in a ſolemn manner, and after an Example given of the loweſt Condeſcenſion in himſelf, by *riſing* as He did, *from Supper*, *throwing off his upper Garment*, and *girding himſelf* like a —ver. 3.

Servant, and doing the Office of the meaneſt of Servants, in waſhing all their Feet. This, it ſeems, was to prepare them for what He was going to enjoyn, and to ſerve as a Comment and Explication upon the Leſſon that was to follow after it; that if at any time they were in doubt to what good Offices the Duty preſcribed was to carry them, they might ſatisfy themſelves, by recollecting the beneficent Pattern of their great Maſter, who was ready to miniſter to them in any Capacity, and who teſtified the greateſt Love, for greater could no Man ſhew, by laying down his Life for them.

A new Commandment, ſays He, *I give unto you*; and yet brotherly Love was a Duty as old as the Law of Nature; it was revived again in the Moſaical Law, and expreſly enjoyned, *Levit.* xix. 17, 18. where we find it written, *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy Heart---- Thou ſhalt not avenge, nor bear any Grudge againſt the Children of thy People, but thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* Nor have the Schools of the Philoſophers, the Heathen Moraliſts, been ſilent upon this Subject, but have celebrated the Praiſes of this Virtue,

tue, have honoured it with the Title of *Humanity*, and have given it the higheſt Encomiums under the name of Beneficence and Generoſity.

Our bleſſed Saviour therefore can only mean, that his Commandment was a new one in reſpect of its Improvement, and of thoſe Degrees of Perfection to which He had raiſed it. The brotherly Love taught by him had two Points of Duty in it above all that was dictated by the Law of Nature, or could be found in the Writings of *Moſes* or the Prophets, or was ever pretended to by the greateſt Maſters of Morality; and thoſe were the Love of Enemies, and the laying down even of Life itſelf to ſerve them. This was a peculiar and a characteriſtick Doctrine of Chriſtianity, for the teaching which, and for its being ſo graciouſly exemplified by him that taught it, the Goſpel Diſpenſation took its Name from this Virtue, and was truly and emphatically ſtiled ὁ νόμος ἐρωτος, *i. e.* the Law of Love.

To ſo high a Pitch of diſintereſted Affection, and to ſo great a Meaſure of undeſerved Bounty, does the Chriſtian

Religion and the Precept of this Text excite and lead us on, when our Situation and Circumstances in the World make it requisite; at present, I hope, and in this Auditory, we have a much easier Task before us, no difficult Strains of an exalted Charity to Enemies, but the more agreeable and delightful Employment of loving our Friends, of calling to mind our tender Years, and the disinterested Friendships of our Youth,

ISAIAH lj. 1. of *looking*, as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, *unto the Rock whence we were hewn, and to the Hole of the Pit whence we were digged*; that whatever Superstructures we have made, whatever Business or Station the Providence of God may have allotted us, we remember still the Discipline that first formed us, where our Foundation was laid, and the early Rudiments of good Literature were happily imbibed by us.

In this respect we are all of us in some sense one Family, Society or Tribe; and as nothing is more beneficial to Society than Goodwill and Affection, nothing so pernicious to it as Hatred and Variance, give me leave from the Precept

in

in the Text to preſs upon you this Virtue, and to recommend it to your Practice, by ſhewing,

Firſt, The Nature and Excellency of the mutual Love enjoyned by our bleſſed Saviour to his Diſciples, and in them to the whole Chriſtian Church.

And, Secondly, The various Degrees and Obligations of this Duty, according to the ſeveral Ties by which Men ſtand more nearly related to one another.

When the Queſtion was put to our bleſſed Saviour, as we read *Matth.* xxij. 36. *Which was the great Commandment of the Law?* his Anſwer was, that *to love God with all the Heart, with all the Soul, and with all the Mind, was the firſt and great Commandment, and that the ſecond was like unto it, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf; and that upon theſe two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.* The Duties of the firſt Table are, no doubt, virtually contained in the former of theſe Precepts; and how the Duties of the ſecond Table are comprehended in the latter, St. *Paul* thus explains, *Rom.* xiij. 8. and following Verſes: *He that loveth another*, ſays he, *hath fulfilled the Law. For this, thou ſhalt not commit Adultery, thou ſhalt*

not Kill, thou ſhalt not Steal, thou ſhalt not bear falſe Witneſs, thou ſhalt not Covet, and if there be any other Commandment (reſpecting, he means, our Duty to Man) *it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, namely, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*: And that for this Reaſon, *becauſe Love worketh no Ill to his Neighbour, therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law.*

The Teachers of Ethicks have uſually defined the Virtue we are ſpeaking of, to be a benevolent Diſpoſition of Mind, expreſſing it ſelf by a middle Deportment between Moroſeneſs and Flattery. Where-ever it can be done, it is the Tendency of Love, both to benefit and to pleaſe; but when it is impracticable to do both, the latter of theſe muſt be diſpenſed with. For true and unfeigned
1 Pet. j. 22. Love muſt be always *with a pure Heart*, without miſleading or encouraging to E-
Rom. xv. 2. vil; ſtudious, indeed, of *pleaſing its Neighbour, for his Good only, and to Edification.* It is not at all inconſiſtent with brotherly Love, where the Caſe requires it, to thwart, to rebuke, or to correct; on the other hand Honeſty it ſelf, by being over rigid, may be blameworthy, and our

Integrity

Integrity become criminal, if it makes our Charity unkind. We may with great Truth eſteem and commend our Friend, though every Diſpoſition in him be not to our liking; we may value and praiſe him for what is laudable, without being obliged to proclaim his Defects; and if we are ſatisfied of his Goodneſs in the main, may wink at and bear with his Infirmities, and yet *our Love be without Diſſimulation.* Rom. xij. 9.

It will be needleſs to run over every Ceremonial, and all the Regulations of this Duty; the great Difficulty is, and our chief Endeavour ſhould be, to get this heavenly Frame of Mind within us, to be indeed *kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly Love*, and then we ſhall of courſe *in honour prefer one another.* If we really have this Light, it will require little skill to make it ſhine before Men; the goodneſs of the Tree will be clearly viſible in its Fruits, and out of the abundance of an honeſt Heart our Mouths will ſpeak; not all, perhaps, with equal Ability, but with ſuch *uncorrupt Communication* as proceeds from love unfeigned, and may *miniſter Grace unto the Hearers.* Rom.xij. 10. Eph. iv. 29.

It

It has been sometimes objected against the Gospel Love we are speaking of, that it is too Romantick; that what it pretends to is against Nature, and many times against Reason. If we are conscious of any thing, it is that we love our selves best, and yet, while acted by this Principle, and which we can never strip our selves of, we are to undertake to love our Neighbour as well, nay, in some Cases to love him better: for his spiritual Good we are to put ourselves to many temporal Inconveniencies, and to promote his eternal Welfare, should be ready to forego almost any thing but our own Salvation.

These may, perhaps, be thought by some, and indeed they seem to be hard Sayings; and so are those by which we
Joh. iij. 7. are required *to be born again, and to be per-*
Mat. v. 48. *fect as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect*; and yet the former of these is no more than a figurative way of Speech, and the latter, whatever it directs, does certainly not mean that we are obliged to, or can attain the Perfection of God in any one of his Attributes. As little can it be intended that to make way for

brotherly Love we ſhould extinguiſh our innate Principle of Self-preſervation; the Love of ourſelves is not forbidden, nay, it is encouraged, and ſuppoſed to be very great, when it is made the Rule and Pattern of loving our Neighbour; we are to love him as our ſelves, *i. e.* our Kindneſs to him ſhould reſemble and be like the Affection we bear to our ſelves, and that it may be without a Mathematical Exactneſs; for every Like is not the ſame, nor does it neceſſarily require an Agreement as to all Degrees and Circumſtances.

A Man therefore may certainly love his Brother as well as any Precept in the Goſpel requires him, and yet be mindful of his own Good moſt, and of ſerving himſelf firſt; he may make it his Buſineſs to promote his own Advancement, Eſteem and Reputation preferably to any others; he may be glad and better pleaſed to ſee an Accompliſhment whether of Mind or Body, whether natural or acquired in himſelf, rather than elſewhere: He may with a very laudable Emulation be *zealous of ſpiritual* and of other good *Gifts*, may *covet earneſtly to* 1 Cor. xiv. 12.

PHIL. iv. 8. *excell*, and ought to do it, in *whatsoever things are of good report, where there is any Virtue or any Praise.*

Thus far even Charity it self may *seek her own*, may fairly enough begin at home, provided it does not end there. There is, indeed, a vicious Self-love that is always *seeking the things of others* in a corrupt Sense, is the Bane of Society, and a Note
2 TIM. iij. 1. of *perillous Times*, is inconsistent with natural Religion and moral Goodness, much more with the beneficent Spirit of Christianity. For that Spirit is, to its honour, remarkable above all others for promoting and cherishing a kind and compassionate Disposition. In the first and purest Ages of Religion, Christians were every where known by this good Quality; no sooner did the Gospel come abroad into the World, but the Love and Charity of its Disciples was universally acknowledged; they were then united in the most happy Fraternity, they lived as Brethren, and, as we have just now heard in the Lesson of this Day,
ACTS iv. 32. *were of one Heart, and of one Soul, and had all Things in common*: and so ready and constant was their Kindness and Familiarity,

arity, that they never met, but they embraced one another with all the Demonſtrations of a ſincere Affection.

It is true indeed, that the ſame Faith and Principles have not in all Times produced a like good Effect; by *Iniquities abounding, the Love of many has waxed cold*, has degenerated into mere Ceremony or Self-intereſt, and Envyings, Wrath and Bitterneſs, have become a Reproach to Chriſtianity. Not that this is any real Diſparagement to the Chriſtian Doctrine; for where-ever the Goſpel is complied with as it ought to be, it creates ſuch a gracious Temper of Mind, as makes Men obliging and courteous, ready and diſpoſed to every good Work, to all Offices of Humanity and Kindneſs. It poliſhes the Roughneſs of Mens Natures, ſoftens a rude and churliſh Temper, and infuſes a more calm and tractable Diſpoſition. MAT. xxiv. 12.

And this may ſuffice concerning the Nature and Excellency of mutual Love in general: What we are in the next Place to conſider, is, Secondly, The various Degrees and Obligations of this Duty, according to the ſeveral Ties by

which Men stand more nearly related to one another.

LUKE X. Our blessed Saviour by his Parable of a certain Man who fell among Thieves, and was relieved by a Stranger, a *Samaritan*, gives us to understand, that every Man living, how remote soever, has a title to our Love. That we are not to confine our good Offices only to our Friends or Countrymen, to People of the same Customs and Religion with ourselves, but must entertain a more diffusive Good-will and Charity. Whatever their Climate or Complexion be, their Knowledge or Dispositions, whatever Corner of the Earth they may inhabit, any Footsteps and visible Marks of Reason and humane Nature, are title enough to our Affection and our Charity.

But tho' all Men are to be Sharers in our Love, all have not a Claim to the like degree of it, but we may and ought to prefer some to others, esteem them more, and do greater Acts of Kindness for them. Tho' all Men are in some sense our Neighbours, yet it is with great Difference, and under various de-

grees

grees of Neighbourhood. The moſt remote are our Enemies, and our Love to them ſhould conſiſt in praying for them, in being ready to forgive, and to be reconciled to them, and in ſhewing Compaſſion to their Infirmities To ſuch as we are not acquainted with, our Love ſhould exert itſelf in a courteous and affable Deportment, neither ridiculing their different Cuſtoms, nor impoſing upon their Ignorance, but being helpful to them in all Acts of Humanity. The Love that is due to our Benefactors, our Friends, and our Relations, is to ſhew itſelf in Gratitude, Fidelity, and a ſincere Affection; in being obedient, kind and ſerviceable to our natural Parents and Relations, peaceable and dutiful to the legal Commands of our Governors, whether Eccleſiaſtical or Civil, and, above all, in cheriſhing our ſpiritual Kindred; and, *as we have opportunity, doing Good, more eſpecially to the Houſhold of Faith.* GAL. vj. 10.

And, even within that Houſhold, there are Diſtinctions and Subdiviſions wherein a kinder Friendſhip may be expected, and is allowable as Men happen

to

to be linked together in one Community, either by Place of Birth, or Agreement in Buſineſs and Employ, or their being joint Members of ſome Society or Body Politick, or their being educated together under one Diſcipline, and in the ſame Seminary of Literature.

From theſe and the like Conſiderations, Men are apt to contract a Kindneſs, and ſometimes a great Partiality for ſuch Aſſociates. There is no where more of this to be ſeen, nor with leſs Reaſon, than among the Religious Orders, as they call themſelves, who every one of them by a narrow-ſpirited Fondneſs for their own Rule and Habit, cry it up as moſt excellent; whereas, indeed, there is no Excellency nor real Worth in ſuch Affectations, whatever Opinion of the Holineſs of a contemplative Life a miſguided Zeal may raiſe in Men.

It may look, indeed, at firſt ſight, ſpecious and plauſible for a Man to ſhut himſelf up from the World for the ſake of a ſecurer Virtue, and a more fervent Piety; that the ſubtil Reaſonings of Infidels may not ſtagger his Faith, nor the Scoffs of wicked Men offend his Ears; that

that he may be out of the way of the Buſtle, the Hatred and Contention of this World, and have nothing to interfere with the Regulation of his own Actions, and the daily Worſhip of his God. All this, I ſay, may carry with it an Air and Appearance of Perfection; and yet, I dare be bold to ſay, that he who continues in the World doing neighbourly Offices to thoſe about him, that performs the part of a good Subject, a careful Parent, a faithful Friend and Adviſer, or the like, is a much better Man, and, of the two, more likely to be accepted of God.

Our bleſſed Saviour ſeems to ſettle this Point, and to decide it very clearly in the Text; the Commandment he there gives us is not to retire from the World, but, on the contrary, to love, *i. e.* to converſe with and to be uſeful to one another; and the Way He directs us to diſtinguiſh ourſelves as his Servants, is not by any Vow of Poverty or Celibacy, neither by an Abſtinence from Meats, nor by being barefoot *Mendicants*, neither by putting on a coarſe Habit, nor by ſaying any particular Offices,

but

but by the Ornament of a bounteous Mind, and by the genuine Effects of a pure and undefiled Religion, ſuch as Goodneſs and Charity: *By this* ſays He, *ſhall all Men know that ye are my Diſciples, if ye have Love one to another.*

The Times indeed of that Ignorance, thanks be to God, have long ſince ceaſed in theſe Realms, never, we hope, to return again, unleſs by a judicial Infatuation we come to grow in love with Bondage, to miſtake Chains for Ornaments, and invite a ſpiritual Tyranny to introduce again its ſpiritual Darkneſs. As Ignorance was for many Ages the Baſis of Superſtition in this Land, and as it was an Increaſe of Knowledge that diſpelled thoſe Errors, and made way for our happy Reformation, it may ſurely be reaſonably hoped, that the Schools of Learning, at leaſt, that Men of a liberal Education, will be diſpoſed to maintain and vindicate the Doctrines of an Evangelical Religion, and the Principles of a mild and limited Government, againſt all the Devices and Attempts of Popiſh and Arbitrary Councils.

We

We have at preſent, by the Indulgence of Providence, ſuch an undiſturbed State of Peace and Proſperity, as has not been in our Memories, and as few of our Forefathers have been bleſſed with; and *ſeeing now that we enjoy ſo great Quietneſs, and that very worthy Deeds are done unto this Nation, we ſhould accept it always, and in all Places, with all thankfulneſs.* Would we make theſe Bleſſings durable and ſtill more extenſive? nothing will have a greater Tendency to ſo good an End, than our bleſſed Saviour's Precept conſcientiouſly complied with. Were mutual Affection and brotherly Love the true Springs that humane Affairs are acted by; were the Publick Intereſt and the general Good, free from all ſelfiſh Motives, the governing Principle, as it is the cuſtomary Profeſſion of Men, our *Jeruſalem* might have Hopes of a long and undiſturbed Peace, and conſequently of a laſting Proſperity. Acts xxiv. 2, 3.

For what have all our paſt Contentions and Animoſities been owing to but Ill-will, Ambition, and an interfering Intereſt? And what is it that divides the neareſt Friends, and ſets Families, Soci-

eties and Kingdoms at Variance, but an unhappy and unchriſtian Spirit of Hatred and Enmity? The only effectual Cure for theſe Evils, is the preſcription in the Text; were that *new Commandment*, that heavenly Grace, but inwardly grafted in our Hearts, it would bring forth the Fruits of good living in the Exerciſe of all our relative Duties; would guard us againſt Diſaffection to a gracious Government, or Diſſention from a pure and excellent Religion; would make us good Citizens, kind Neighbours, and faithful Friends, ready, by an extenſive Charity, to promote the
GAL. v. 13. Happineſs of all Men, and *by Love to ſerve one another.*

Such a beneficent Frame of Mind will be excellently adapted to the Purpoſes of this Day's Aſſembly; will encourage the annual Returns of it, and remove all former Cauſes of its Diſcontinuance; and, by bringing together ſo many uſeful and eminent Perſons in the various Employments of Church and State, make us look back on our earlier Studies with a pleaſing Reflection, and participate, by a relative Honour, of each

others

others Advantages and good Succeſs in the World, and be ſtudious of contributing to the Wants, and of advancing the Reputation and Credit of ſo conſiderable a Community.

And what is a nobler Motive ſtill, this heavenly Virtue, and truly Chriſtian Accompliſhment, will denote us to be *Fellow-Diſciples* of a much greater *Maſter*, and diſtinguiſh us to be ſo, better than any of thoſe Denominations which an intemperate Zeal, or an uncharitable Spirit, may make us fond of. It is by this Badge and Character that we are, if ever, *to be ſealed unto the Day of Redemption*; *hereby know we that our Lord abideth in us by the Spirit that he hath given us*; and *by this ſhall all Men know that we are his Diſciples, if we have Love one to another.*

Eph. iv. 30.

1 Joh. iij. 24.

Let us therefore, for our own Satisfaction and Credit in this World, for the Good of others, and the Benefit of this Brotherhood, and of all that we ſtand related to, cloath ourſelves in this amiable Dreſs, and put on the Habit and Ornament of a gracious and friendly Diſpoſition; ſo ſhall we do Honour to

our Inſtructors, and diſtinguiſh our ſelves from the Rude and Illiterate; and prepare and qualify ourſelves for that bleſſed Society hereafter, where Ill-will and Unkindneſs can have no place, and where the moſt perfect Communion and Friendſhip is to abound for ever, in the Preſence of that God, who *is Love* it ſelf, and whoſe Influence alone can make us to be ſo: Which that it may do effectually, and infuſe that and every other good Grace into our Hearts, God of his infinite Mercy grant for the ſake of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

To whom with the Father and Holy Spirit, be aſcribed all Honour, Majeſty and Praiſe, both now and for evermore. Amen.

F I N I S.